EVEN MY FATHER, THE CHIEF OF OUR SMALL STATE, CANNOT KNOW

AS A PRINCESS OF A SMALL COMMUNITY,

MY PRESENCE IS MERELY A FORMALITY.

NOBODY NOTICES...

THAT I HAVE "NOTHING" IN MY EYES.

ACT IX : KARAKURI * THE PRINCESS OF THE AUTOMATONS

"THE CURTAIN RISES"

ANYTHING EXCEPT THIS VISION THAT IS NOW ENGRAVED IN MY MIND.

...THAT I CAN'T SEE

ACT VIII : KARAKURI ❄
THE PRINCESS OF THE AUTOMATONS
"THE CURTAIN RISES"

IT WAS DURING A PARTY ORGANIZED BY A BARON WHO LOVED TO FIND NEW WAYS TO ENTERTAIN.

THIS GOES BACK TO MY CHILDHOOD.

HE LIT A LOT OF OLD MANNEQUINS ON FIRE FOR FUN. THEY HAD BEEN USED BY PRINCELY FAMILIES.

AND SOON, I WILL BE NOTHING MORE THAN ASHES..."

ONE DAY I'LL HAVE TO ACCEPT MY ROLE AS PRINCESS BY GOING AGAINST MY TRUE FEELINGS.

I AM CONSUMED SLOWLY...

THOSE MANNE-QUINS... WERE MINE.

"I AM CONSUMED SLOWLY...

BUT I KNEW THAT...

VVVHH...

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NOW, LUCILLE?

ARLEQUINO IS SUCH AN IMBECILE.

AT LEAST WE WON'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE AIRING OUT THE CASTLE.

YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, GUY?

YEAH... WE COULDN'T MAKE A MORE STUBBORN PERSON THAN YOU.

I AM GOING TO CONTINUE WITH MY MISSION.

WELL...

A SHIROGANE'S TASK IS TO ANNIHILATE THE AUTOMATONS!

SHLING

NO, NO, NOT AT ALL! MY HEART IS FULL OF JOY! JUST LIKE DANTE WHO ASCENDED TO HEAVEN...

... GUIDED BY BEATRICE!

OLDIE IS PRETTY SLICK!

I'VE KNOW YOU SINCE YOU WERE A LITTLE BOY.

HE HE,

SO SHINY!

AHH, NOOO!! MOMMMYYY!! GIMME BACK MY MEDAL !!!

ALL THAT'S LEFT TO DO IS TO FIND IT BEFORE THEY DO.

THEY JUST HAVE THE METHOD TO FIND IT; THEY DON'T HAVE THE STONE.

OH... AND YOU KNOW HOW TO DO THAT?

ARLEQUINO SAID HE HAD A WAY TO FIND OUR STONE.

SO... WHAT NOW?

WE NEED TO GO FAR FROM HERE.

IT'S NOT LIKE WE'VE BEEN SITTING ON OUR THUMBS.

WE'VE BEEN SEARCH-ING ...

FOR THE STONE FOR 18 YEARS.

GOODBYE.

A SMALL COUNTRY OF FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND INHABITANTS

LOCATED BETWEEN FRANCE AND SWITZER-LAND.

THE COMMUNITY OF LOHEN-STEIN...

THE TOTAL AREA OF THIS COUNTRY IS... MMM... SLIGHTLY SMALLER THAN THE PREFECTURE OF SAITAMA, JAPAN.

BLA BLA BLA BLA

WHAT'S UP WITH ALL THE PEOPLE?!

HAHA HA!!

SAY, GUY...

IN OTHER WORDS, THEIR PRINCE IS LIKE A KING, AND THEY INTEND FOR HIM TO ACT LIKE ONE.

THIS IS A CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY. THE STATE IS UNDER COMMAND OF A PRINCE, A PRIME MINISTER, AND HIS GOVERNMENT.

BEFORE, THE STEEL INDUSTRY WAS A THRIVING SECTOR, BUT NOWADAYS LOHENSTEIN HAS INVESTED A LOT OF MONEY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGIES.

HEY, GUY...

I'VE NEVER EVEN HEARD OF THIS COUNTRY!

OH, AND WHY DOES IT ALWAYS HAVE TO BE ME WHO'S DRIVING WHEN I DON'T EVEN HAVE MY LICENSE!!!

WHY THE HELL DID I COME HERE WITH YOU GUYS?!

AND SO...

PISS OFF... PISS OFF...

OF COURSE! YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT WE CAN'T DIE!

COME ON, NARUMI! IT'S NOT A PROBLEM! EVEN IF WE FALL FROM A CLIFF...

IF WE GET INTO AN ACCIDENT IT WON'T BE MY FAULT!

I'M POOPED, YOU GOT THAT?! DEAD TIRED!!!

I WENT TO ESTABLISH A SUSPECT LIST FOR...

...ANYBODY LINKED TO THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE "SOFT STONE."

I DIDN'T GO TO JAPAN SPECIFICALLY TO SAVE YOU.

OKAY, THEN NOW WHAT?

AH?!

I PRESENT TO YOU JOHN-ADAM II.

WELL, WHO IS IT?

THERE'S A PERSON WHO LEFT JAPAN JUST AFTER THE INCIDENT.

SO...

TAP

THE PRINCE OF LOHENSTEIN.

HIS STORY IS VERY MUCH LINKED WITH THE "SOFT STONE."

NOTABLY WITH A HEAD OF A COMPANY...

WHILE HE WAS DOING RESEARCH IN THE INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY FIELD,

HE CAME ACROSS SOME JAPANESE COMPANIES ...

HE ESTAB-LISHED HIMSELF WITH CERTAIN PEOPLE.

NARUMI... I'LL REMIND YOU THAT YOU CAN'T STORE THE STONE IN AN ADULT BODY.

YOU MEAN THAT... THE ROYAL FAMILY ACTUALLY USED ONE OF THEIR OWN TO HIDE THE "SOFT STONE"?!

"THE SOFT STONE IS WITH THE ONE WITH A GOOD SMILE"...

RIGHT?

THAT MEANS THAT...

HOURRA!!

HOURRA!!

DAMN! I LOSE ALL FIGHTS WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO A KID! I CAN'T DO IT!

!

IT'S AN EVENT ORGANIZED IN THEIR HONOR.

THE YOUNG ARISTOCRATS ARE INTRODUCED TO SOCIETY AT 18.

WHAT?!

IT'S AN ORGANIZED FESTIVAL TO CELEBRATE THE PRINCESS'S 18TH BIRTHDAY. IT'S A TRADITION TO CELEBRATE IT AT THE SAME TIME AS THE DEBUTANTE BALL.

LOOKS LIKE THERE'S A SHOW OVER THERE...

BRAVO!!

HOURA!!

BECAUSE IN THE BODY OF THAT YOUNG WOMAN, ELISE, THE STONE COULD BE HIDING.

HOURAA!!

LOOK CLOSELY, NARUMI.

VLAM

WHAAAAH!!

OUAH!!

AND WE NEED TO CHECK IT OUT BEFORE THE AUTOMATONS DO...

YES

IN THE BODY.. OF THAT SMALL GIRL?!

HOURAH!!

HMM...

BLA BLA

WHATS HAPPENING OVER THERE?

BLA BLA

OOH

AH!

WHAT'S THAT THING?!

CLIC CLIC CLIC

MAKE WAY!

WHY ARE YOU BLOCKING THE STREET ?!

WHAT ?!

IT'S AN AUTO-MATON!

SCHRANG

CLAC

WATCH OUT!!!

WHAT THE HELL ?!

VLOF

VRRAM

VROOM

VROOM

HELP!!

VRRAM

I'LL GO GET OLYMPIA ...

AAA

NARUMI! THE AUTOMATON IS GOING FOR THE PRINCESS!

HHH!!

RUN, YOUR HIGH-NESS !!

WHAM

VVOM

AAAHH !!

SCHLACK

INCREDIBLE... HE CAN RUN THAT FAST THROUGH A PANICKED CROWD. NARUMI, YOU'RE LIKE A WILD ANIMAL.

DON'T SHOOT!

HER HIGHNESS HAS BEEN CAPTURED !!

HE'S RUNNING AWAY!!

HUH?

POF

AFTER THEM!!

SCREAMING

JUST WAIT A DAMN MINUTE !!